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City Treasurer Palm Names John O'Connell to New Audit Panel

Hartford (Conn.) – Hartford City Treasurer Kathleen Palm today announced her appointment of John B. O'Connell to the City's new Independent Audit Commission, which will be convened shortly.

Under the City of Hartford's new Charter, the three-member audit panel will have broad responsibility for scrutiny of all aspects of the City's financial management, Palm said.

"John O'Connell is a natural choice, given his long-standing and intimate familiarity with the City's budget and other financial affairs," said Palm, who noted O'Connell's traditionally strong watchdog role as chairman of the City Council's Operations, Management, and Budget Committee during the years he served as a member of the Court of Common Council from 1979-1983 and again from 1993-2001.

"John is not afraid to ask the tough questions and demand answers," Palm said. "This new audit panel will do its best work if it functions in the interest of

preserving the City's fiscal integrity. John has proven over many years of City service that he has only the City's best financial interests at heart."

Under the new Charter, the three members of Independent Audit Commission are to be named as follows: one is to be appointed by the City Council, one is to be appointed by the City Treasurer, and one is to be appointed by the City Council from among two persons nominated by the City's 10 largest taxpayers. Palm's appointment of O'Connell is the first to be announced.

O'Connell currently serves as Labor Relations Manager at Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation and has a long resume of community involvement, including with the Capitol Region Boy Scouts of America, the Greater Hartford Chapter of the NAACP, Hartford Areas Rally Together, and Hartford Trees, Inc. He holds a B.A. from Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT.

The Independent Audit Commission will have its own staff and budget under the new Charter, with the City's Chief Auditor reporting to it directly.

Palm said she hoped the Commission would move swiftly to confirm Patrick Campbell, the incumbent Chief Auditor, to continue in his current role.

"Mr. Campbell has proven himself to be fair, reasonable, comprehensive and assiduous in his work as Chief Auditor for the past nine years," Palm said, "and his expertise has saved or recouped the City literally millions of dollars in that time."

O'Connell said he was "honored" to be appointed to the important new panel, and pledged to protect the City's financial position in his new role.

"Preserving the City's financial interests was a crucial part of my role as a councilman," said O'Connell, "and that's how I see my new role. I am grateful for the confidence the City Treasurer has placed in me, and am honored to be named to this new audit panel."